



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) agenda

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

12:30 PM

**Oregon Convention Center,
777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Portland
Oregon, 97232, Room F150
| <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81464909852>**

- 1. Call To Order and Roll Call (12:30 PM)**
- 2. Public Communication (12:31 PM)**

Public comment may be submitted in writing. It will also be heard in person and by electronic communication (video conference or telephone). Written comments should be submitted electronically by emailing amy.nelson@oregonmetro.gov. Testimony on agenda and non-agenda items will be taken at the beginning of the meeting.

Those wishing to testify orally are encouraged to sign up in advance by either: (a) contacting Amy Nelson by phone at 503-314-2360 and providing your name and the agenda item on which you wish to testify; or (b) registering by email by sending your name and the agenda item on which you wish to testify to amy.nelson@oregonmetro.gov. Those wishing to testify in person should fill out a card located on the table directly outside the meeting room door.

Those requesting to comment virtually during the meeting can do so by joining the meeting using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81464909852> and using the “Raise Hand” feature in Zoom or emailing amy.nelson@oregonmetro.gov. Individuals will have three minutes to testify unless otherwise stated at the meeting.

- 3. Commission/Council Liaison Communication (12:35 PM)**

- 4. General Manager Communications (12:40 PM)**

- 5. Financial Update (12:45 PM)**

5.1 MERC Finance Report

[MERC 26-47](#)

Presenter(s): Ashley Sloan, MERC Finance Manager

Attachments: [Financial Report](#)

[Financial Statement of Activity](#)

- 6. Venue Business Reports (12:50 PM)**

7. Consent Agenda (1:00 PM)

7.1 In Consideration of the December 3, 2025 MERC Meeting
Minutes

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes](#)

[MERC 26-48](#)

8. Presentations (1:05 PM)

8.1 Future Vision Update (1:05 PM)

Presenter(s): Malu Wilkinson, Planning, Development & Research Deputy
Director
Jessica Zdeb, Principal Regional Planner

8.2 FOTA Performance Update (1:30 PM)

[MERC 26-50](#)

Presenter(s): Craig Stroud, General Manager, Visitor Venues

9.0 Adjourn

10. Executive Session (2:00 PM)

Under ORS 192.660(2)(d) to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to conduct labor relations

Agenda #: 5.1

File #: MERC 26-47

Agenda Date: 1/7/2026

MERC Finance Report

Ashley Sloan, MERC Finance Manager

Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission

Date: January 7, 2025

To: Commissioner Karis Stoudamire-Phillips, Chair
Commissioner Damien Hall, Vice Chair
Commissioner Deidra Krys-Rusoff, Secretary-Treasurer
Commissioner Chris Oxley
Commissioner Dañel Malán- González
Commissioner Dave Parulo
Commissioner David Penilton
Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal

From: Ashley Sloan, MERC Finance Manager

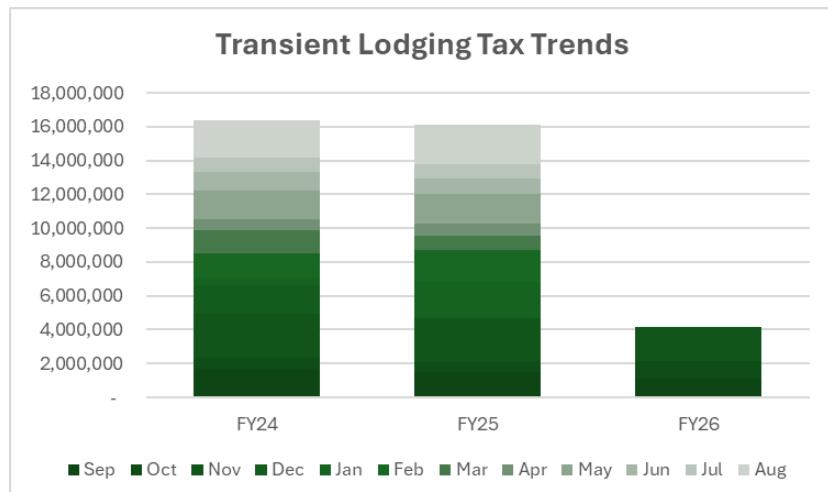
Subject: November 2025 Financial Update

Introduction

The attached financial reports cover the months of July – November 2025 at the MERC venues. OCC maintained a full fall schedule, hosting major events such as the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry, the Hoffman Annual Meeting, and the Entomological Society of America. P'5 hosted Broadway's *Shucked*, the Portland Book Festival and the sold-out *An Evening with Kamala Harris*, presented by Literary Arts. Expo hosted the annual Portland Metro Fall RV Show and started the season early with the Portland Holiday Market.

Transient Lodging Tax

Total November collections were down \$548k (21%) from prior year November collections. This swing is primarily due to the timing of remittances, with a delay in collections from Multnomah County. This puts TLT collections at 10% behind last year to date collections. However, December collections are expected to improve as delayed November payments are received.

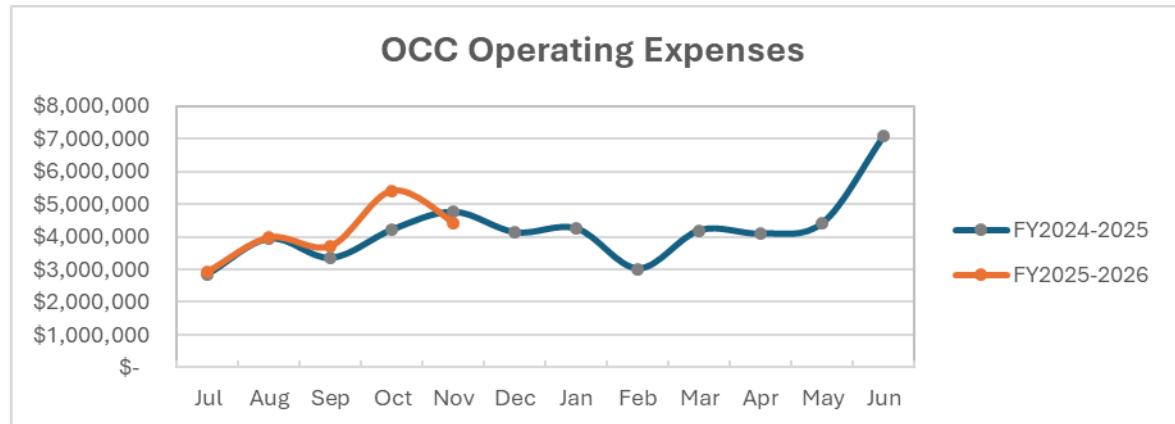
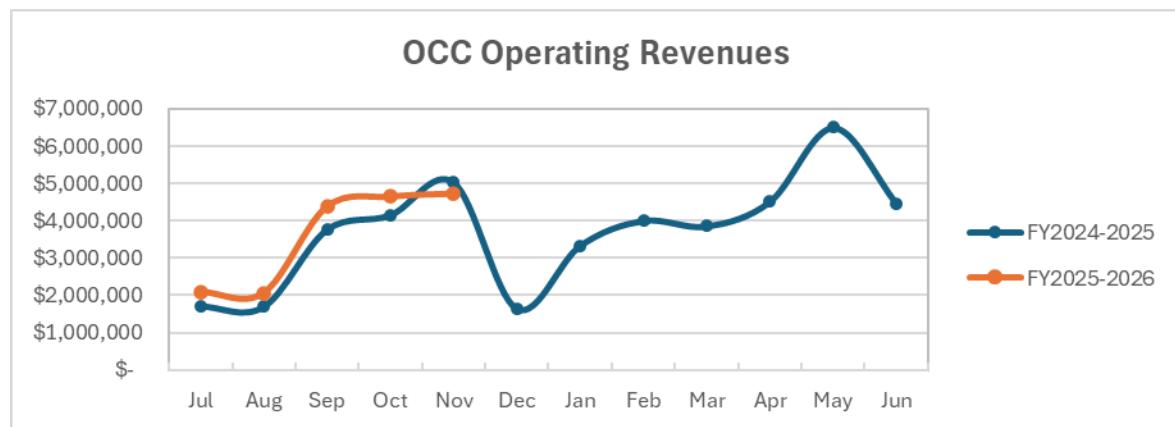


Oregon Convention Center

OCC November revenues closed at \$4.7 million, driven by the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC), the return of Hoffman's Annual Meeting and Dinner along with the Entomological Society of America (ESA). FY26 Charges for Services were 7% ahead of FY25, this year over year increase was primarily due to strong food and beverage sales at the top events. Orbit Café sales are up 135% (\$165k) vs last year with an average check out time of 23 seconds.

Year-to-date, OCC revenue is still tracking ahead of prior year at \$1.6M (10%) higher. Materials and Service and Personnel expenses are right on budget.

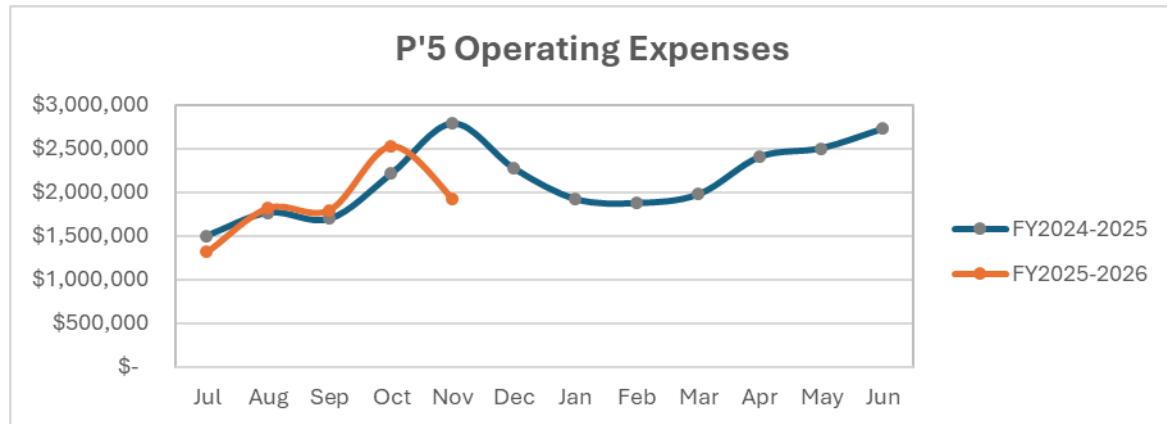
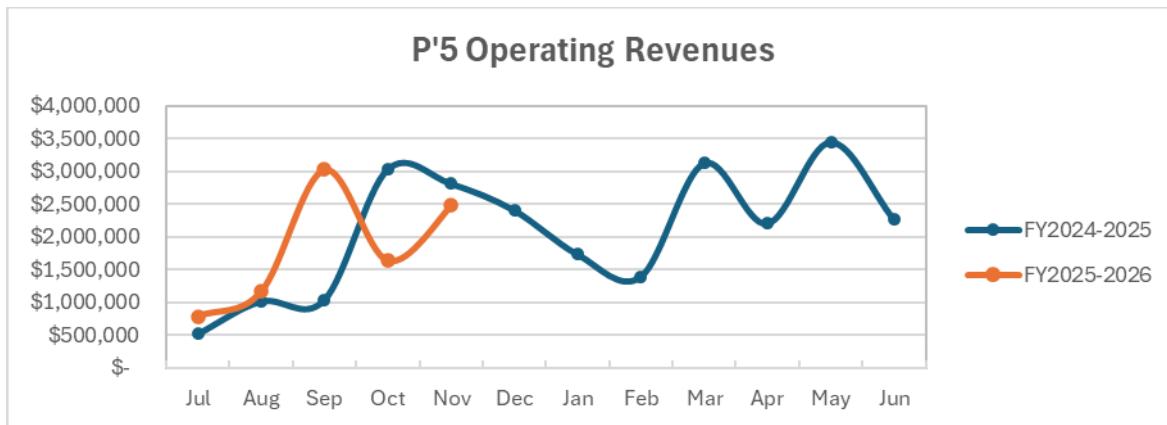
Highest Grossing Events	Current Month Event Revenue	% of Event Revenue
Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry of North America 2025 Annual Meeting	559,283	21%
Hoffman Annual Meeting and Dinner	549,445	21%
Entomological Society of America	493,766	19%
Functional Fabric Fair powered by Performance Days	288,950	11%
All Other Events	772,930	29%
	\$ 2,664,374	100%



Portland'5

P'5 continues to show strong performance year to date, but the early, seasonal swings from *The Lion King* are starting to even out. November revenue was 12% lower than last year, again, primarily due to the exceptional impact of *Wicked* in FY25. Year-to-date, revenue remains ahead by \$684k (8%). Attendance has started to even out compared to last year, with only 6,500 higher attendance year to date. P'5 expenses are on or below budget.

Highest Grossing Events	Current Month Event Revenue	% of Event Revenue
Shucked	210,831	12%
Stomp	150,971	9%
La Boheme	141,779	8%
O Christmas Tea	108,859	6%
All Other Events	1,125,837	65%
	\$ 1,738,276	100%

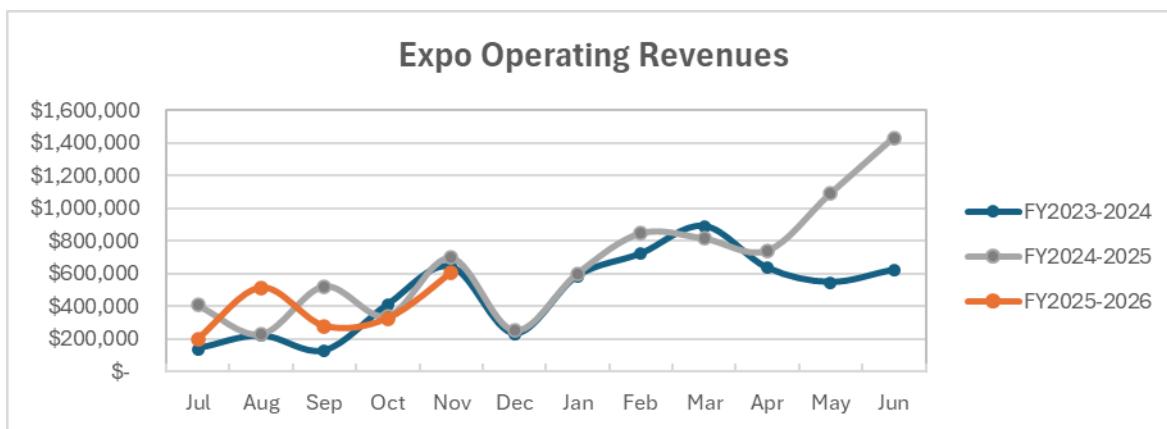


Portland Expo Center

November revenue reached \$606K, with the two highlight events being the Holiday Market and the Portland Metro RV Fall show. Year-to-date revenue is still 13% lower than last year, but this aligns with expectations for a non-Cirque year. On a more comparable basis, Expo revenue year-to-date stands at \$387K (25%) ahead of FY24, the last non-Cirque year.

Total expenses are down \$1M year to date, due to the bond payment being finalized in FY25. But, we continue to monitor and adjust for our budget vs actuals in FY26. There are savings in Personnel expenses with the re-organization in July. But Materials and Services will continue to exceed budget and this trend has been incorporated into our forecast.

Highest Grossing Events	Current Month Event Revenue	% of Event Revenue
2025 Portland Holiday Market	271,994	48%
2025 Portland Metro RV Dealers Fall RV Show	231,714	41%
Hot Tub and Swim Spa Sale	20,498	4%
Northwest Cheer Showcase	19,358	3%
All Other Events	26,594	5%
	\$ 570,158	100%



MERC Capital Projects

OCC Capital Project Status Report FY2025-26					
Project	Phase	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Notes
Public Safety Front of House Programming	In Progress	225,000	89,824	225,000	Receiving last invoices
Safety MLK & Holladay Entrance	In Progress	200,000	9,400	200,000	
OCC Waterproof: Rain Garden	In Progress	30,000	31,228	33,000	
F&B: Orbit Market Remodel	In Progress	52,000	20,620	52,000	Receiving last invoices
Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure	Contracting	240,000	153	240,000	
Integrated Door Access Controls & Door Replacement	In Progress	578,000	36,230	578,000	
Website Redesign & Drupal Platform Upgrade	In Progress	53,000	105,826	125,000	Carryforward from FY25
Facility Condition Assessment	Planning	700,000	-	700,000	
Holladay Lobby Exterior Door Threshold & Waterproofing	Design	275,000	7,200	275,000	
EST 4 Fire Alarm System Upgrade	In Progress	585,000	-	585,000	
Food & Beverage: Design & Projects	Design	575,000	-	575,000	
Technology Office & MDF Space Renovation	Design	95,000	3,553	95,000	
Total		3,608,000	304,034	3,683,000	
% of Budget			8%	102%	

Portland'5 Capital Project Status Report FY2025-26					
Project	Phase	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Notes
ASCH house lighting controls	In Progress	-	-	241,000	Carryforward from FY25
Newmark House PA Replacement	In Progress	-	-	20,000	Carryforward from FY25
P5 F&B Levy Cap Investment	Planning	400,000	-	400,000	
Keller FOH Elevators Upgrade	In Progress	350,000	115,676	350,000	
P5 Website - Drupal upgrade	In Progress	250,000	106,426	250,000	
ASCH Rigging Upgrade	Planning	250,000	-	250,000	
ASCH gas boiler replacements	Planning	40,000	-	40,000	
ASCH Roof and Drains	Complete	850,000	714,129	850,000	Receiving last invoices
Total		2,140,000	936,231	2,401,000	
% of Budget			44%	112%	

Expo Capital Project Status Report FY2025-26					
Project	Phase	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Notes
Expo Futures Infrastructure	Design	2,000,000	-	2,000,000	
Expo F&B Levy Cap Investment	Planning	478,537	-	478,537	
Total		2,478,537		2,478,537	
% of Budget			0%	100%	

MERC Statement of Activity
 Oregon Convention Center
 November 2025

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER								
	Current Month vs Prior Year Month			YTD vs Prior Fiscal Year		Benchmark -> 42%		
	November FY26	November FY25	% Var	July - Nov FY26	July - Nov FY25	% Var	FY26 Budget	% Budget YTD
Beginning Balance				13,842,580			13,842,580	
Operations								
Charges for Services	2,861,621	2,671,227	7%	13,906,615	11,988,980	16%	31,262,121	44%
Food & Beverage	1,684,134	1,396,820	21%	7,637,647	6,177,785	24%	16,134,385	47%
Facility Rentals	509,456	483,011	5%	2,230,718	2,103,387	6%	5,800,184	38%
Audio Visual	197,269	258,222	-24%	1,325,078	1,393,666	-5%	3,000,000	44%
Utility Services	119,429	126,260	-5%	676,908	616,746	10%	1,477,986	46%
Telecommunications	103,601	68,067	52%	543,254	490,984	11%	1,115,000	49%
Parking Revenue	163,016	203,354	-20%	811,747	658,646	23%	2,400,000	34%
All Other	84,716	135,493	-37%	681,263	547,767	24%	1,334,566	51%
Local Government	1,823,971	2,310,516	-21%	3,669,093	4,131,445	-11%	17,087,690	21%
Lodging Excise Tax	1,823,971	2,310,516	-21%	3,669,093	4,131,445	-11%	14,878,190	25%
VFTA	-	-		-	-		2,209,500	0%
Interest Earnings	37,493	52,867	-29%	137,446	214,946	-36%	514,900	27%
Miscellaneous Revenue	9,984	(607)	-1745%	43,965	24,562	79%	9,000	488%
Total Revenue	\$ 4,733,070	\$ 5,034,003	-6%	\$ 17,937,118	\$ 16,359,933	10%	\$ 48,873,711	37%
Personnel Services	1,096,903	1,639,785	-33%	5,717,392	5,822,990	-2%	14,089,453	41%
Materials & Services	2,646,774	2,588,139	2%	11,336,020	10,636,501	7%	29,440,423	39%
CAP Transfers Out	672,197	528,487	27%	3,360,983	2,642,435	27%	8,066,359	42%
Total Expenditures	\$ 4,415,874	\$ 4,756,411	-7%	\$ 20,414,395	\$ 19,101,926	7%	\$ 51,596,235	40%
Net Operations	\$ 317,196	\$ 277,592		\$ (2,477,277)	\$ (2,741,993)		\$ (2,722,524)	
Capital								
Capital Revenue	40,000	200,000		243,199	200,000		615,000	
Capital Expense	(26,475)	(286,468)		(306,239)	(1,023,329)		(3,664,250)	
Net Capital	\$ 13,525	\$ (86,468)		\$ (63,041)	\$ (823,329)		\$ (3,049,250)	
Change in Fund Balance	330,722	191,124		(2,540,317)	(3,565,322)		(5,771,774)	
Ending Fund Balance				\$ 11,302,263			\$ 8,070,806	

MERC Statement of Activity
Portland'5
November 2025

PORTLAND'5						
	Current Month vs Prior Year Month			YTD vs Prior Fiscal Year		Benchmark -> 42%
	November FY26	November FY25	% Var	July - Nov FY26	July - Nov FY25	
Beginning Balance				4,973,120		
Operations						
Charges for Services	2,012,922	2,424,490	-17%	8,241,014	7,545,488	9%
Food & Beverage	141,310	163,089	-13%	681,286	651,536	5%
Ticket Services	755,868	1,071,272	-29%	3,324,483	3,155,315	5%
Production Services	335,376	339,263	-1%	1,182,396	1,132,091	4%
Booking & Sales	337,410	304,545	11%	1,094,488	924,097	18%
P5 Presents	101,901	141,655	-28%	552,831	303,619	82%
Admissions	152,756	181,198	-16%	665,444	841,900	-21%
All Other	188,300	223,468	-16%	740,086	536,929	38%
Local Government	188,408	244,443	-23%	379,002	437,090	-13%
City of Portland Contributions	-	-		-	-	
Interest Earnings	54,008	46,864	15%	236,844	264,933	-11%
Miscellaneous Revenue	224,386	96,022	134%	225,139	150,627	49%
Total Revenue	\$ 2,479,724	\$ 2,811,819	-12%	\$ 9,081,998	\$ 8,398,138	8%
Personnel Services	979,729	1,631,626	-40%	4,614,953	5,058,896	-9%
Materials & Services	570,272	852,044	-33%	2,900,019	3,384,500	-14%
CAP Transfers Out	371,206	302,121	23%	1,856,031	1,510,604	23%
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,921,207	\$ 2,785,791	-31%	\$ 9,371,003	\$ 9,954,000	-6%
Net Operations	\$ 558,517	\$ 26,028		\$ (289,005)	(1,555,862)	
Capital						
Capital Revenue	-	-		-	24,374	
Capital Expense	(105,127)	(361,594)		(936,231)	(4,453,639)	
Net Capital	\$ (105,127)	\$ (361,594)		\$ (936,231)	\$ (4,429,265)	
Change in Fund Balance	453,390	(335,566)		(1,225,237)	(5,985,127)	
Ending Fund Balance				\$ 3,747,883		
						\$ 3,508,113

MERC Statement of Activity
Expo
November 2025

EXPO						
	Current Month vs Prior Year Month			YTD vs Prior Fiscal Year		Benchmark -> 42%
	November FY26	November FY25	% Var	July - Nov FY26	July - Nov FY25	
Beginning Balance				661,660		
Operations						
Charges for Services	594,107	683,888	-13%	1,859,456	2,152,325	-14%
<i>Food & Beverage</i>	43,451	41,884	4%	134,360	201,233	-33%
<i>Facility Rentals</i>	155,587	191,881	-19%	433,287	717,736	-40%
<i>Parking Revenue</i>	187,350	191,497	-2%	566,679	735,568	-23%
<i>Ticket Services</i>	59,289	64,397	-8%	206,896	128,219	61%
<i>All Other</i>	148,430	194,229	-24%	518,234	369,570	40%
Local Government	-	-		-	-	
Interest Earnings	3,154	3,142	0%	14,834	20,135	-26%
Miscellaneous Revenue	6,407	8,281	-23%	29,032	20,111	44%
Transfers In	2,500	-		12,500	-	
Total Revenue	\$ 606,167	\$ 695,310	-13%	\$ 1,915,822	\$ 2,192,571	-13%
Personnel Services	187,422	337,574	-44%	881,381	1,148,599	-23%
Materials & Services	315,357	277,200	14%	1,183,990	1,013,933	17%
CAP Transfers Out	85,457	1,098,949	-92%	427,287	1,414,447	-70%
Total Expenditures	\$ 588,236	\$ 1,713,724	-66%	\$ 2,492,657	\$ 3,576,979	-30%
Net Operations	\$ 17,931	\$ (1,018,414)		\$ (576,835)	\$ (1,384,408)	
Capital						
Capital Revenue	-	200,000		-	-	
Capital Expense	-	(286,468)		-	-	
Net Capital	\$ -	\$ (86,468)		\$ -	\$ -	
Change in Fund Balance	17,931	(1,104,881)		(576,835)	(1,384,408)	
Ending Fund Balance				\$ 84,825		
						\$ 1,767,941

Agenda #: 7.1

File #: MERC 26-48

Agenda Date: 1/7/2026

In Consideration of the December 3, 2025 MERC Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes

Meeting details:

Meeting: Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission Meeting
Date: December 3, 2025
Time: 12:30pm - 2:30 pm
Place: Zoom - webinar ID: 814 1114 0803

Commissioners present:

Chair Karis Stoudamire-Phillips, Damien Hall, Deidra-Krys-Rusoff, Dañel Malán-González, Chris Oxley and David Penilton

Commissioners excused:

Deanna Palm

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips called the meeting to order at 12:32pm

Public Communication

- Chair Stoudamire-Phillips opened the meeting to members of the public wanting to testify on agenda and non-agenda items

Commission / Council Liaison Communication

- Commissioner Penilton shared highlights of the recent National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals Excellence Awards event
- Chair Stoudamire-Phillips congratulated Supplier of the Year award recipient Tracy Chapman
- Councilor Rosenthal shared updates on Zoo Lights, Metro's notice to withdraw from the P5 IGA with the City of Portland, Progress on Regional Housing Coordination Strategy and oversight commission for housing services, and an upcoming response to Governor's economic development proposal
 - Commissioner Krys-Rusoff asked if there will be a citizen oversight committee for housing services
 - Rosenthal responded that a new commission would replace the tri-county body, include elected officials and community reps, and make funding recommendations

General Manager Communications

Craig Stroud provided the following updates:

- Introduced food hall concept at 910 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Renovation plan includes building and adjacent food cart pod
- Prosper Portland is seeking Metro investment via 10-year loan for this development concept
- Venues FY24 economic impact: \$513M total, 17% increase over FY23, representing 3,500 jobs, \$30M tax revenue
- P5 agreement termination update

- Commissioner Krys-Rusoff asked how does current economic impact compare to pre-COVID levels
- Stroud responded FY19 peak: \$785M vs FY24: \$440M; jobs down from 7,000 to 3,100

Financial Update

Ashley Sloan, MERC Finance Manager, presented an update on venues financial performance for July – October 2025

- Lodging tax collections tracking 3% ahead of last year
- OCC revenue up 17% YoY; major events driving growth
- P5 revenue was down in October vs. last year (due to prior year's Wicked), but YTD was up 18%
- Expo revenue up 13% YoY; 47% ahead of FY24
- Capital projects on track and under budget
 - Commissioner Malán-González thanked Sloan for including the detail around capital projects
 - Commissioner Penilton asked about the expenses spike in October
 - Sloan shared there was a \$175K software charge plus September event expenses posted in October
 - Commissioner Penilton asked if we track visitors' origin and length of stay for economic impact
 - Lembo responded yes, annually via ZIP code and ticket data
 - Commissioner Penilton asked about capital projects budget gaps in the report
 - Sloan responded that most projects are still open; team monitors monthly. Stroud to follow up on anomalies

Attachment: [Financial Report](#)
[Financial Statement of Activity](#)

Venue Business Reports

Portland'5 Centers for the Arts

Rachael Lembo, Executive Director, provided the following updates:

- Partnership with Northwest Children's Theatre for spring 2026
- Keller Café redesign into quick-service station; closure in Jan 2026
- LED lighting upgrade at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall completed
- Transition back to City of Portland by June 2027 if termination agreement is not finalized sooner

Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center

Cindy Wallace, Executive Director, provided the following updates:

- OCC+Expo: SafeConnect public safety program extended through July 2026
- Hosted NCBMP conference (460 attendees)
- Upcoming holiday markets: My People's Market, Crafty Wonderland
- Maintenance and deep cleaning during quiet periods
 - Commissioner Krys-Rusoff asked if there are any metrics showing SafeConnect program successes
 - Wallace to share annual report from Portland Metro Chamber with overview of calls, assists, and improvements

Consent Agenda

- **Consideration of the November 5, 2025, MERC Meeting Minutes**

This item was approved.

Attachment: [Meeting Minutes](#)

Travel Portland 1st Quarter Report

James Jessie, Chief Sales Officer presented

Revenue Outlook:

- OCC revenues projected at \$20M for FY25; strong performance expected through FY26
- Long-term focus on fiscal years 27–31 with significant tentative business in pipeline

Current Year Performance:

- First-quarter OCC revenue tracking well; no anticipated shortfalls
- Room night goal: 200,000 for the year; on track to exceed targets

Customer Satisfaction:

- Convention service scores remain high (3.9/4), ensuring repeat business

Economic Impact:

- ROI already surpassing targets; strong second quarter anticipated

Market KPIs:

- Challenges persist in occupancy and ADR; strategy focuses on filling OCC to stabilize rates

Event Success:

- National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals conference was highly successful, generating new business opportunities and positive media coverage

Sports Market Pivot:

- Expo Center upgrades attracting new events (e.g., Junior Volleyball Association West Coast Cup starting 2028)
- USA Track & Field returning in December 2026

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Report

Angela Nelson, VP of Equity and Partnerships presented

Influencer & Media Engagement:

- \$150K Travel Oregon grant supporting BIPOC influencer program; Latino press trip hosted in August

Community Partnerships:

- Events with local storytellers and cultural organizations; focus on amplifying diverse voices

Accessibility Initiatives:

- Collaboration with Travel Ability and Travel Oregon to improve destination accessibility

Rose City Certified Program:

- New hospitality training launched; 200 individuals certified, goal of 1,000 by fiscal year-end

Cultural Enrichment Grants:

- \$20K awarded to local nonprofits promoting multicultural engagement

Scholarship Program:

- Five small businesses completed advanced business management training; next cohort begins February 2026

Marketing Initiatives:

- Portland Staycation campaigns (Fall and Winter editions) to boost local tourism
- Portland Dining Month returning in March with multi-course menus at two price points

Attachments: [Travel Portland 1st Quarter 2025-26 Report](#)

Expo Future Project Update

Craig Stroud, GM Visitor Venues presented

- Governance structure for historical memorialization under development
- Geotechnical assessment of Hall A nearing completion
- MOU signed with Interstate Bridge Replacement Program for potential light rail overnight facility
- \$2M interim sports investment progressing; design by Scott Edwards Architecture
- Joint Metro Council & MERC meeting scheduled for Feb 10
 - Commissioner asked if light rail across the new bridge has been confirmed
 - Stroud responded not yet - planning ensures feasibility if funding and decisions align

Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Stoudamire Phillips adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

- *Minutes submitted by Amy Nelson*